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Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 69/58 entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", adopted on 2 December 2014, underlined the strong support, expressed at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament held on 26 September 2013, for taking urgent and effective measures to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

2. The General Assembly called for urgent compliance with the legal obligations and the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken on nuclear disarmament and endorsed the wide support expressed at the high-level meeting for a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

3. The General Assembly also called for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

4. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States with regard to achieving the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in particular on the elements of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventieth session, and also to transmit the report to the Conference on Disarmament.

5. By a note verbale dated 17 February 2015, Member States were invited to communicate their views on the issues. They were also invited to provide executive summaries of their contributions for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General, while their submissions in extenso would be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, if so requested by the Member State. The replies received are contained in section II of the present report. Replies received after the deadline will be issued as an addendum to this report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Brazil

[Original: English]
[6 June 2015]

Brazil is fully committed to the objective of nuclear disarmament, as set out in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in which States parties are mandated to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. However, 45 years after the entry into force of the Treaty, the compliance deficit in this regard persists. Brazil deems the current stalemate intolerable and believes that it is high time to elaborate and implement the effective measures called for in article VI. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/58, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on nuclear disarmament, particularly on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, Brazil considers that such an instrument must include:

(a) A series of legal prohibitions against the development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons;

(b) An unequivocal and legally binding obligation to enter into a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable process of complete nuclear disarmament, within an agreed time frame;

(c) Provisions for the control of fissile and other nuclear materials relevant to nuclear explosive devices;

(d) Provisions for the verified dismantlement of delivery vehicles or their conversion to a non-nuclear capability;

(e) An effective means of verifying the implementation of the obligations and prohibitions under the instrument, including through declarations, inspections, monitoring, etc., with the International Atomic Energy Agency playing a leading role in this process, according to its statute;

(f) A framework of national implementation measures;

(g) An effective and non-discriminatory means of protecting States' entitlement to the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear technology, subject to safeguards.

Early consideration should be given to:

(h) The practical, technical, legal, financial, administrative and other arrangements required for the creation of a treaty body to oversee its implementation, including through the creation of policymaking and decision-making organs, to be composed of State representatives.

Although Brazil considers negotiations on a comprehensive convention a priority, other options to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons being brought to the table, including a legal ban, deserve serious consideration. Brazil believes that such negotiations must occur within the multilateral system and sees current proposals for the establishment in the General Assembly of an open-ended working group to identify and elaborate effective measures for the full implementation of disarmament commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a first step in this process.

China

[Original: Chinese]
[3 June 2015]

On the very day when China first came into possession of a nuclear weapon, the Government of China issued a statement calling for the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear disarmament should be guided by the concept of universal security. Nuclear disarmament efforts should follow the principles of "maintaining global strategic stability" and "ensuring undiminished security for all" in a step-by-step manner.

Countries with the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and should continue to take the lead in making drastic and

substantive reductions in their arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding way, so as to create the necessary conditions for complete and thorough nuclear disarmament. When conditions are ripe, other nuclear-weapon States should join in the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

To attain the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament, the international community should develop, at an appropriate time, a viable long-term plan comprising phased actions, including the conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Pending the conclusion of the international legal instruments on nuclear disarmament, all nuclear-weapon States should take measures to reduce the danger of nuclear war, diminish the role of nuclear weapons in national security policy and increase mutual trust among States in the area of security.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[26 May 2015]

Cuba reiterates its firm commitment to general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, as the highest priority. We call for a comprehensive convention to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons because we are convinced that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination and prohibition in a transparent and irreversible manner.

The historic high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament on 26 September 2013 demonstrated the broad international support for nuclear disarmament as a priority and witnessed a vigorous demand for nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments with regard to nuclear disarmament, cease the modernization of their nuclear arsenals and exclude nuclear weapons from their security strategies and doctrines.

We reaffirm our commitment to implementing General Assembly resolutions 68/32 and 69/58 entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", including the commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September each year.

Events were held around the world to mark the first commemoration of this Day in 2014. At the events in which our country participated, we stressed the need to adopt concrete measures to bring about nuclear disarmament, we drew attention to the dangers posed by nuclear weapons, and we emphasized that the only way to ensure that humanity would never suffer the terrible impact of nuclear weapons was their prohibition and total elimination. We urge Governments, parliaments and civil society to take additional measures every year to commemorate this date.

We welcome the decision of the General Assembly to convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference to identify the measures and actions needed to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in the shortest possible time. Cuba will offer its full support for the successful convening of such a conference.

Furthermore, it is in the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States to receive unequivocal and legally binding negative security assurances from nuclear-

weapon States that they will not use or threaten to use those weapons. In that connection, we call for a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to be negotiated and adopted as soon as possible.

Our country will continue to work together with the rest of the international community to initiate as soon as possible negotiations for a universal, legally binding instrument that prohibits the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and provides for their verified destruction within a specific time frame.

India

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

India supported General Assembly resolution 69/58 submitted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, in which the Assembly called for the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention.

India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines.

In its working paper CD/1816, India enumerated specific steps, including reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons; reduction of the salience of nuclear weapons in the security doctrines; measures by nuclear-weapon States to reduce nuclear danger; negotiation of a global agreement among nuclear-weapon States on "no-first-use" of nuclear weapons; negotiation of a universal and legally binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States; negotiation of a convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; and negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and on their destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame.

India considers the Conference on Disarmament as the appropriate forum for the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament through the establishment of a subsidiary body with a mandate agreed by consensus as part of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work.

India joined the statements made in the Conference on Disarmament on behalf of G-21 in March 2014, September 2014 and March 2015 calling for urgent commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament, in particular on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

Iran (Islamic Republic of) (on behalf of the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries)

[Original: English]
[13 July 2015]

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries stresses that nuclear disarmament continues to be the highest priority and that the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, it calls upon all States to continue to accord the highest priority to nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time and under strict and effective international control. In the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those that possess the largest nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility. In this context, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries calls upon the five nuclear-weapon States to:

(a) Fully comply with their overdue obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

(b) Not to transfer to any recipient nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices; and not to encourage or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or acquire them or control over them;

(c) Cease any efforts to upgrade nuclear weapons or carry out research on, and develop, new types of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and their means of delivery;

(d) Exclude the role of any types of nuclear weapons in their security strategies and those of their allies;

(e) Reduce immediately the operational status of nuclear weapons, including through complete detargeting and de-alerting;

(f) Reduce substantively all types of nuclear weapons, pending their total elimination;

(g) Apply the principles of irreversibility, transparency and verifiability in nuclear disarmament;

(h) Provide effective, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances;

(i) Not conduct any nuclear-weapon test explosions, and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to facilitate its early entry into force;

(j) Bring into effect, immediately and unconditionally, the security assurances provided by the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries calls upon the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to fully implement the resolution and decisions adopted at the Review Conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries reaffirms the long-standing strong global support for the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the

Middle East as a matter of priority and, pending its establishment, demands that Israel renounce possession of nuclear weapons and accede, without any precondition and further delay, as a non-nuclear-weapon State to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries calls for practical steps to the convening of the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, without any further delay.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries urges the Conference on Disarmament to agree as soon as possible on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work in order for it to start substantive work.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries calls for the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 69/58 entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament".

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries calls for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

The above principles and recommendations should constitute some of the possible elements of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

The following are suggested, inter alia, to be included in the text of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons:

- Principles and objectives of the convention
- The scope of the convention
- Definitions
- Measures (obligations) towards nuclear disarmament with a time frame
- Verification: system and organ
- Measures to ensure full compliance with its provisions
- Establishment of a periodic review process with regard to the implementation of the convention
- Settlement of disputes
- Final provisions

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[16 April 2015]

Lebanon wishes to emphasize that:

- It does not possess or produce weapons of mass destruction. It complies with the United Nations resolutions in that regard and is opposed to the legality of the threat or use of such weapons.

- It welcomes and supports all initiatives aimed at bringing about general and complete disarmament, especially in the Middle East, and emphasizes that the region should be free of weapons of mass destruction. It is, however, concerned at the failure of Israel to comply with international law. Israel maintains a nuclear arsenal that constitutes a constant threat to all the States of the region and consequently to international peace and security.
- It is essential for the Arab States to continue to call for the establishment of a region free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East because that is the only available option for coping with the dangers that the nuclear armaments of Israel and its other weapons of mass destruction represent for international peace and Arab national security.
- The international community should continue to demand that all States in the region, including Israel, sign treaties on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons.
- It is essential to unify the Arab position, step up the role of the League of Arab States and take action to acquire the scientific knowledge and secure the equipment required to protect against weapons of mass destruction. It is also vital to continue efforts to expose Israel as a State that does not heed the call for the development and dissemination of peaceful uses of nuclear technologies in all fields that serve sustainable development and to take into account the various needs of the Arab States.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[1 June 2015]

Mexico believes that the only guarantee against the use and effects of nuclear weapons is their total elimination, as something that does not exist cannot proliferate or be deployed.

During the preparations for the ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Mexico and the other members of the New Agenda Coalition submitted a working paper (NPT/CONF.2015/WP.9) setting out two options for the elaboration of effective measures to achieve nuclear disarmament, pursuant to article VI of the Treaty:

- The negotiation of a separate agreement
- The adoption of a framework agreement.

Mexico reiterates that any overall agreement on nuclear weapons should, at a minimum:

- Cover all nuclear weapons and ban their existence
- Establish non-extendable deadlines for the destruction of all nuclear weapons
- Ban and eliminate nuclear weapons irreversibly
- Establish a verification agency
- Enter into force upon signature and ratification by a set number of States, with no restrictive clauses
- Be universally applicable and open to all States.

In another vein, in the First Committee of the General Assembly, Mexico was one of the sponsors of the resolution entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations" (resolution 69/41), which established the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral negotiations on the matter.

In addition, Mexico is one of the main proponents of the Humanitarian Initiative, which promotes a new approach to the debate on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation: a humanitarian perspective. In that connection, it has endorsed the joint statements that have been made since 2012, the most recent of which was made by Austria, on behalf of 159 countries, at the ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Furthermore, Mexico organized the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Nayarit, Mexico, on 13 and 14 February 2014 and is one of the 107 States that have endorsed the Austrian Pledge (now known as the Humanitarian Pledge).

Lastly, as President of the Conference on Disarmament in 2015, Mexico submitted a draft programme of work with a mandate to negotiate on all agenda items.

Netherlands

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

At its sixty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/58 entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament".

The Kingdom of the Netherlands herewith submits the view of the Government of the Netherlands on the issues covered by this resolution.

The Netherlands wishes to emphasize that it fully shares the ultimate goal of resolution 69/58, a world free of nuclear weapons. The Netherlands participated at the ministerial level in the high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament on 26 September 2013, during which various perspectives on how to best achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world were discussed.

The Netherlands notes, with regret, that resolution 69/58 reflects only one particular viewpoint, while various other proposals made during the 26 September 2013 meeting were not captured by it.

As stated in the explanation of vote that was read by the delegation of the Netherlands on behalf of 19 countries during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the resolution includes only limited references to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, while the Netherlands would have very much preferred a broader reference to the Treaty and an underlining of its pivotal importance to nuclear disarmament.

The Netherlands also stands by its questions raised on the international conference to be held in 2018. The Netherlands feels that the importance of international efforts on nuclear disarmament is insufficiently emphasized by processes that are, in scope and intention, insufficiently clear and transparent. This will prevent key States from participating and is detrimental to the international

trust on which successful disarmament is based. It might also undermine the collective efforts in the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Netherlands further regrets that, by focusing on one core element of the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the resolution does not do justice to the urgent attention that needs to be paid to the adoption of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament and the other core issues. The Netherlands also believes that starting negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention without the participation of the States that possess nuclear weapons will not advance the overall goal of nuclear disarmament.